

DAILY HONOLULU PRESS.

VOLUME I.

HONOLULU, HAWAIIAN ISLANDS, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1885.

NO. 6.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

In order to commence the issue of this paper on the 1st of September, we are compelled to adopt a temporary heading which will be replaced by one of handsome design and finish as soon as the electrotype plate can be obtained from the Coast, when the whole make up of the paper will be changed and improved.

PROPRIETORS DAILY HONOLULU PRESS

OUR INVENTIVE CRANKS.

Donn Platt Talks About the Devices of Stranded Cranks.

Louis Napoleon and American Inventors—Thompson's Life-Preserving Seat—The Bed Cooler and Mosquito Guard.

Who has not met, at unpleasant frequency in life, a pale, slender, sunken-eyed and seedy man, who invents? Who is there has not wished himself dead, or the inventor in hades, on such occasions?

Conquering a continent with a scarcity of laborers has developed our ingenuity to a point of insanity. Our patent office at Washington is packed with devices of stranded cranks. The law of our holding holds good, and for one success we have a thousand failures.

The late war was fought to a successful conclusion, not alone by bayonets and artillery, but by agricultural implements, that enabled the North to produce all upon which we lived at home, while it sustained a million of men at the front and another million swindling the government in the rear.

We look about us and find ourselves beggared by inventions. The revolving chair I sit in, the table I write at, the portable book-stand, the pen, the ink, the paper, in a word, every article I use comes from the brain of invention, and is stamped as patented by the government.

Yesterday my dentist inserted a brass saw in my grinder and, working a treadle with his right foot, made me wish I were dead.

"Where, in the name of Satan, did you get that instrument of torture?" I cried, with my few remaining teeth on edge, and my poor nerves tingling in anguish.

"It was invented by a farmer to shear sheep," he responded, "and falling at that was picked up by a dentist."

The sheep escaped to have the torture bestowed on less fortunate humanity.

I witnessed once a farce at the Palais Royal, Paris, when the fun turned on an exhibit of inventions, rejected by the Imperial Commission selected to pass upon machines, offered the grand international exhibition.

I remember one instrument, designed to open oysters, that filled the entire stage with its complicated cog wheels and levers. Another was called Chastity's belt, and consisted of concealed daggers about the waist of the unprotected female, that flew out like a *cheval de frise* on touching a spring.

"Very ingenious, indeed," said an old spectator, "but I would like to know who controls the spring. Monsieur, my wife might spring it on me."

This was taken as a most reasonable objection by the audience that broke into a roar of laughter and applause.

It was about that time that an old American crank appeared at Paris, by the name of Thompson, who proposed to make every article of furniture in a ship life preserving, in case of wreck. His greatest invention was a life preserver in the shape of a stool.

The male passenger was to strap this stool to that part of his person where the legs end and the body begins. Each stool was warranted to float one hundred and eighty pounds, so that when the ship went down the voyager would float out to sea in a sitting position. The female was to be supplied with an India-rubber air-tight bustle that would serve the same floating purpose.

Thompson carried the emperor at Charbourg going through a view of the French fleet, and with a life-preserving stool strapped to his inventive person—Thompson I mean, not the emperor—jumped overboard in a rough sea.

Little Louis was prejudiced in favor of life-preservers at the time, and he presented the indomitable Thompson with a snuff box adorned with little Louis's intellectual commencement, set in diamonds. Thompson, of the life-stool, went to taking snuff, and, it is to be hoped, shortened his inventive life in that way.

The most amusing instance, however, that came to my knowledge was in the shape of a Yankee possessed of a sewing machine, then just invented. He managed, as a Yankee will, to get an interview with the Emperor, and told that imperial shah that he could teach him in ten minutes to make a pair of pantaloons in twenty minutes.

The cost of a French soldier had been reduced to five sous a day. If each soldier could be taught to make his own breeches, the cost would be yet further reduced. The Emperor tried his hand at breeches-making, and succeeded. The Yankee sold his patent for a good round sum in cash, and was far at sea when the war department of France discovered that the nether garment, made in twenty minutes, lasted about ten. The knot subsequently invented, was then unknown.

A break in the thread revealed the seam. It was after the emperor had been taught by experience to regard Yankee ingenuity in its true light that an inventor appeared at Paris on his way to St. Petersburg. He had discovered the process of rilling cannon and applying to heavy ordnance the principle of the miniature. Armed with letters from the Russian minister, at Washington, he was on his way to St. Petersburg to offer the Russian government the use of his invention. He was bearer of dispatches from our State Department, and, as secretary of legation, I helped him on.

The Crimen war, however, was in progress, and travel to St. Petersburg was dangerous and troublesome. Our inventor grew discouraged and returned to Paris. With that impartiality peculiar to our people, he concluded that French money was as good as Russian, and wished to offer his invention to France. I told him the Emperor, through sad experience, had come to be

rather shy of Yankee inventors. My friend persisted. An idea struck me. I said: "Return to your lodgings, take out your invention and fire it up the chimney, especially at midnight."

The good fellow, without seeing my object, did as I directed, and in twenty-four hours was arrested as a conspirator and thrown into prison.

I hastened to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. I told him that an ingenious American, who had discovered the art of applying to artillery the principle of the minute projectile, and on his way to St. Petersburg under endorsement from the Russian minister, at Washington, to offer his great invention to the czar, had been arrested as a conspirator.

The minister was extremely interested. I had not only an order for the immediate release of my countryman, but in twenty-four hours a commission of experts to test the invention. I shall believe to my dying day that the French fellows stole Roosevelt's invention for the better improvement of artillery.

Be that as it may, Roosevelt had himself to blame. He could not be induced to stick to his great invention. He had a thousand. His busy brain teemed with a million. The one important commission that never reported, but as I believed used the discovery, was followed by half a dozen others on all sorts of projects.

One of these, and quite entertaining, was a repeater, in the shape of a musket, that was to carry forty loads, one on the top of the other. The soldier, in the quiet of his camp, was to load his musket for the next action. The first charge exploded, fired the next, and so down to the last.

The report on this exploded solemnly by the commission, gave me a laugh of an hour's duration by the clock. It was to the effect that while the invention was extremely ingenious, and at first sight seemed valuable, a little reflection led to the conclusion that the proposed repeater was impracticable. At long range, for instance, it would have short charges. As the distance lessened, the range would grow long. Again were a soldier, armed with this repeater, to be wounded or killed, his musket would continue discharging, and probably with injurious effect to his own comrades. In case of a panic, where arms were thrown away by flying troops, their flight would be hastened or ended by bullets from their own musket.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the repeater was not adopted by the French government.

The report, made in dead earnest, reminded me of Squibb's, our first humorist, on the effort made to create a flying artillery, by strapping mountain howitzers to the backs of mules. There was no question, the report said, that in the celerity of movement great progress had been obtained. The practical advantage gained, however, in action was not so clear. The natural disposition of the mule to kick rendered loading extremely difficult and accuracy of aim quite impossible.

Again, while it was quite natural for a mule to turn his rump to the enemy, it was impossible to make the animal comprehend on which side the enemy was.

In the only action had, the lieutenant continued, in which the experiment had been tried, the firing was very promiscuous, both as to time and aim, the mountain howitzers being sowed in a disorderly manner, shooting into their own forces as much as at the foe. While the enemy fled, in much disorder, some twenty miles, the lieutenant's force could never be found again. It was his grave conclusion that it had been kicked to pieces by the mountain and mounted howitzers.

My mind has been turned in this direction by the experience of a guest—a most ingenious gentleman, of an inventive turn, who came to pass some weeks with me at Macao-chow. He came loaded down with inventions gotten up more for his personal comfort than with an idea of profit.

Among these was "Walcott's patent bed cooler and mosquito guard," which consisted of a huge fan suspended above the bed, so worked by cunning machinery that the weight of the occupant kept it moving for ten hours. As we are without mosquitos at Macao-chow, and the nights are cool that we sleep under blankets, I told him that it was scarcely necessary to set up his invaluable invention.

He persisted, and at the dead hour of midnight the household was startled by a crash, followed by yells such as have not been heard since the Indians left.

These awful noises came from my inventive guest's apartment, and seizing a light and a revolver I hastened thither. I found the door locked, and as the frightful noise continued I threw myself against it, breaking it open, and was met by a volley from a revolver that knocked the candle from my hand and sent bullets whizzing by me. Believing that burglars, bent on murder, were within I emptied my revolver promiscuously in the dark, and that had the effect of redoubting the cries.

Other guests arrived with lights and we found no burglars about, but our friend on the bed under a mass of ruins. It seems that he had been startled from a dream of murder, and rising confused had been hit by his fan, and blindly resisting the blow, had gone into a general engagement with his own machinery. The revolver I had encountered was another ingenious contrivance, fastened to the door to repel burglars.

My friend is altogether in a bad way, with a broken arm, black eyes, and bruised shins, while I and my other guests have an able bodied and pious clergyman returning thanks for our escape from immediate death.

DONN PLATT.

OLD FASHIONED FLOWERS.

Fair Arabella, talking slang, Cannot endure old-fashioned flowers—"Cheap flowers, you know, so awful slow, That in poor people's garden grow, And only watered by the showers, I like a bloom that costs a guinea!"

Fair Arabella, you're an idiot, And think, perhaps, par' air's too common To please so superior a woman! And that the sapphire could be sweeter If bought, like gauds, by the meter.

CHARLES MACGAY.

LONDON, Aug. 29

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ESTABLISHED 1857.
Unlimited Liability to Stockholders.
Assets, \$3,250,000.
Reserve, \$1,000,000.
INCOME FOR 1879:
Premiums received after deduction of re-
insurance, \$3,250,000.
Losses promptly adjusted and paid here.
213-254

UNION MARINE INSURANCE COMPANY
INCORPORATED 1875.
CASTLE & COOKE, AGENTS.
Assets January 1st, 1884, nearly \$17,000,000.
Policies issued on the most favorable terms, and
absolutely Non-Forfeitable after Two
Payments.
EXAMPLE OF NON-FORFEITURE PLAN:
Insured age 35 years—20 years Endowment Plan for
\$5,000.
Annual Premium \$242.50.
At the end of the 2d Year, \$40.85
3d " 60.85
4th " 83.85
5th " 113.